3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Cattle-keepers of southern Angola make butter in calabash churns which are gently swung on a pole. The Ovimbundu have taken cattle from the south and west, but have not adopted dairy products. The cattle of the Ovimbundu are valued as a standard of wealth; have great purchasing power; are used to pay taxes and fines; and, in addition to these social and economic values, are the most important sacrificial animals. This is an instance of the arbitrary selection of some traits of a culture complex, while other factors, even those of economic importance, are ignored.

Cultural losses, and failures to utilize factors which were accessible are, according to the foregoing examples, due to change of habitat from northern Angola to the Benguela Highlands; European contacts; long-established agricultural habits; and conservatism, which to some extent is a characteristic of tribes at all cultural levels.

INTEGRATION OF TRAITS

A study which is concerned with growth of culture, demands more than a historical, geographical, and mechanistic interpretation. Morphological and historical research assists in tracing origins and in forming hypotheses respecting the order in which the traits were brought together. But such inquiries are static rather than dynamic, and they are a necessary prelude to anthropological work rather than an ultimate aim.

To the methods of research already followed there should be added a psychological approach with the object of showing the way in which various elements of culture are blended and are made to function.

The following pages illustrate the way in which a field investigation is brought into contact with the welding of cultural elements, and the examples chosen call attention to principles that are responsible for the process of integration. This assimilation of cultural elements renders the study of an isolated trait impossible, as the following instances indicate. These illustrations are chosen from field notes, and are grouped in such a way as to emphasize the pivotal elements of Umbundu culture around which minor traits revolve.

Some of the examples given are intended to illustrate a relationship between language (which includes folklore, proverbs, and riddles) and nature knowledge. The latter is closely connected with hunting, food-gathering, and the selection of materials for handwork.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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The inquiry then turns to occupations which indicate that sex dichotomy of labor is a fundamental principle of tribal life. In connection with the details of food supply and occupation, ritual acts are prominent, and in association with these the functions of the medicine-man are important.

Cultural liaisons are again illustrated when studying domestic animals, for this inquiry leads to a consideration of the social and economic importance of cattle, which are used in ritual connected with the death and burial of kings.

These are but a few instances indicating the way in which lines of investigation converge, though they may appear to be distinct. In fact the very division of a monograph into chapters is misleading in its suggestion of distinct divisions of tribal life, whose parts are actually a psychological unity.

When accompanying boys and men during their food-collecting and hunting expeditions a wealth of nature lore and a richness of vocabulary were discovered, and a vocabulary of one hundred and thirty words comprising names of birds, reptiles, mammals, and plants was prepared. Species are carefully distinguished, to such a degree that discussions respecting the correct native names for similar species tend to be prolonged and humorous.

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When I realized the closeness with which the native observes the habits of animals, there was no difficulty in understanding why folklore stories of animals are so popular and so amusing in their descriptions of animal behavior. In addition to its associations with nature study, folklore reveals standards of conduct and processes of rationalization.

In collecting names of birds and their cries, and while recording hunting customs, I was informed of the bird Onjimbi which flies at night to give the sound of death to those who will not see the morning. Then there is a nocturnal bird called Esuvi which is able to catch spirits of the dead who are active at night. A spirit so caught dies a second death, but what this means I could not immediately discover. Later a man said he was sick because Esuvi had caught the spirit of his grandfather. This implies the belief that an ancestral spirit is a guardian whose function ends when a second death is experienced.

Study of natural history sometimes leads to a point of importance in social procedure. There is a bird Onduva whose feathers are used for decorating the head of a dead king and for embellishing the person of a medicine-man; the feathers may not be used in any other

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way. Such instances as these came to light when my primary intention was a study of the use of wooden arrows for killing birds.

An inquiry about the names of trees and the use of timbers led to the topic of making and using wooden figures for magical purposes. Woodcraft, wood-carving, and religion are associated.

There is no fallacy so great as that of supposing that data may be collected and retained in mutually exclusive divisions. For example, a study of proverbs leads to native ideas concerning government, succession to office, and standards of conduct. The Ovimbundu say, "A turtle cannot climb on a tree stump, some one has to place it there." What is the meaning of this proverb? There are some men who occupy positions for which they have no ability; such men have been chosen through influence. The normal successor to chieftainship and kingship is the eldest son of the deceased man's principal wife, but if this rightful successor is stupid, some other son will be chosen. Yet the foolish youth may have friends who see their own advantage in having a weak ruler; they therefore combine to place him in office. The turtle has been placed on the tree stump, since it could not climb there.

In addition, folklore shows projection of the mentality of human beings into the lives of animals. Bird cries, with their supposed calls and answers, indicate that the birds have their family relationships involving strife, love, jealousy, and generosity. To the Ovimbundu, birds are a feathered human community.

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Proverbs reveal a philosophy which is expressed by the German *Weltanschauung*. "If you are full of food, do not climb on a leopard's back; the leopard may be hungry." This means that one should not be foolishly exalted through good fortune. "You cannot tie a buck's head in a cloth; the horns will stick out," expresses the idea that crime cannot be concealed. "Hot water does not burn a house, and cold water does not make mush," is a sarcastic reply to one who boasts of things he cannot do. A riddle may express a philosophical train of thought. "What is it that lives while it dies and dies while it lives?" This is the log of wood the end of which is from time to time pushed farther into the fire. Like a human life, the log is being slowly consumed while yet living. Such examples as these call attention to a welding of thought, language, nature lore, and ideas that regulate conduct.

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In considering food supply and occupations, division of labor on a sex basis is clear. Social sanctions have determined the appro-

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priateness of certain tasks for males and females respectively, and individuals reflect these attitudes in their ideas and conduct.

My interpreter and others who were questioned laughed at the idea that men and women might interchange their occupations in the course of house-building. A woman collects wood for fuel, but not for house-building. Structural work is in the hands of men who dig the foundations, erect the poles, tie the crosspieces and add the roof. Women carry water for mixing the clay which is puddled by children; men, women, and children apply wet clay to the wattle walls. "Suppose a man should carry water?" I asked. "He would be laughed at and people would say that he was a he-woman," came the ready answer.

Women invariably make pottery among the Ovimbundu, but this is not always so in Negro tribes. Women of the Ovimbundu are likewise basket-makers, but they do not make mats, for this occupation is considered suitable for men only. Only women pound corn; before daybreak the heavy wooden pestles are at work and until sunset the rocks reserved for this operation are the centers of female activity, which includes singing and gossip. Only men herd cattle and only males are hunters. Women and children are the collectors of wild fruits and caterpillars, but only men take honey from the hives.

Agriculture and the preparation of food are entirely in the hands of the women. Men never eat with women; the latter have to carry the prepared food to the men's communal house in the middle of the village. Both men and women catch fish, but there are methods appropriate for each sex. There is a sex-division of labor without any implication of the inferiority of women.

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Occupations cannot be studied merely in a formal way, for, although the tasks are performed every day, a ceremonial element is involved. A clay pit is consecrated by the killing of a fowl; so also is the rock which is used as a base for pounding grain. The young blacksmith is initiated after two years of apprenticeship. On this occasion a dog is killed with the hammer which the master made for his pupil and the blood of the sacrificed animal is sprinkled on the tools. The remainder of the ritual and belief has been described in connection with occupations of the Ovimbundu. Study of the blacksmith's work was begun as research in technology; but failure to purchase the large hammer, even for a tempting sum, led to the discovery of considerable ritual.

Abstention from sexual relationships is enjoined on men and women who are going fishing. That copulation would induce the

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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fish to stay together at the bottom of the river, is the reason alleged for this taboo. A young hunter is ceremonially initiated. Throughout his life he has to make sacrifice to the ancestral spirits of hunters who are in the house where bows of famous hunters are kept; these ceremonies must be performed before a hunter leaves for the chase. A caravan is a commercial undertaking, but, before setting out, the head of a dead chief is asked for a guarantee of success; meanwhile a sacrifice is made by a medicine-man. A wooden image, when consulted by the medicine-man, indicates the correct caravan route. These instances illustrate a blending of the sacred and the profane in occupations.

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Sexual relationships among the Ovimbundu form a basis of social life, as they do in all communities, but the sexual aspect is not all-pervading and completely dominant.

In early years children separate during play. Boys play games of hunting and warfare, enter into competition with bows and arrows, or amuse themselves with wood-carving. Girls find amusement in imitating their mothers in the occupations of making pottery and baskets, and in cultivating the fields. The small sums of money which a girl derives from the sale of produce from her own corn patch are personal property which she usually spends on trinkets and palm oil. This measure of economic independence, combined with considerable freedom of choice in marriage, indicates an individuality that has not been generally recognized.

I have mentioned among the Ovimbundu a system of friendship between boys and girls of from twelve to sixteen years, which permits the children to sleep together in the home of one of the girls in whose house the early evening has been spent. Cohabitation is forbidden, and pregnancy would be a disgrace. The practice is not unlike that of night visits by a lover in certain European countries during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (W. Goodsell, A History of the Family as a Social and Educational Institution, p. 365). Clearly sex is a factor that plays its part as a formative influence from infancy onward, until final emphasis of sex dichotomy is made by tribal initiations.

The social position of woman may be considered by selecting a few points from the data relating to courtship, marriage, and divorce. Marriages are sometimes arranged during infancy, but this does not invalidate the previous statement that considerable freedom of choice is allowed; a girl is not compelled to follow arrangements made during her childhood. A bride has to make contributions toward the

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

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domestic equipment. Ritual enters into the introduction of the bride to her home, as was shown by explaining the functions of three elderly women, who erect the fireplace, bring new fire from the chief's house, and assist the bride in a ceremonial way. If a husband has reason to doubt the virginity of his bride, he bores a hole in her cloth with a firebrand, and makes her carry the cloth to her parents. But the marriage is not necessarily invalidated, since the husband is reconciled by a return of some portion of his gifts to the parents.

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Some light is thrown on the ethics of family life by considering the meeting which takes place in the men's council house (*onjango*) before the bride goes to her new home. Here in the presence of relatives from both families the father of the bride says, "We are taking these things for our daughter, we hope she will not shame us." He turns to his daughter, enjoining her to be hospitable, never forgetting to feed her husband's people when they call.

Minor incidents help in a study of the psychology of family life. When husband and wife have quarreled, the latter goes away for a few hours into the bush and arranges that a number of burrs shall be clinging to her dress when she returns. If her husband silently and spontaneously picks these from her cloth, amicable feeling is restored.

Analysis of the grounds for divorce shows that women have their rights, though the male is in the more favorable position. In Rome the legal rights of a matron were slender, but in actual practice she held an important and honorable position. Similarly the status of an Ocimbundu woman is higher than the divorce laws imply.

The human side of family differences was well brought out by studying the interference and indirect influence of relatives on the relationship of husband and wife. Details have been given indicating that divorce is not entirely a matter of adjustment between families; the village chief may be called upon to act as arbiter. The final ceremony of repudiation, at which the husband slaps his wife's back saying, "It is finished," is a public rite. There is here a close connection between family consent and public ratification.

Although a woman may return to her parents under certain conditions which justify the divorce of the husband, parents are not anxious to encourage this practice. Marriage tokens would have to be returned to the husband of their daughter; moreover there might be a difficulty in securing another husband. In this instance a conflict occurs between parental obligations and cupidity. This is again shown by the argument which always arises respecting

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

the custody of a widow. The father, the brother, or the maternal uncle of the widow may take her. In the words of my interpreter, each says, "It is better that you should take her," and at last someone says, "I will take her."

A chief of Ngalangi revealed the most important aspect of polygyny when he apologized for the fact that only five of his eleven wives were present. The chief was anxious to emphasize the fact that he had eleven wives, though six were at work in the fields.

When one considers the prestige of village chiefs, and further reflects on the desirability of maintaining this power within family groups, the institution of polygyny becomes more understandable. In addition there is the necessity of having women to cultivate the fields. A polygynous system does not necessarily cause domestic conflict, because each wife has her own hut, fireplace, and utensils. Custom obliges a chief to spend four nights in each hut in regular sequence.

A first and principal wife is not offended by the introduction of other wives, for these reduce her own labor and announce the fact that she is the principal wife of a wealthy man. When photographing the king of Ngalangi with his wives, I observed that he sent the principal wife from the group in order to adorn herself with a piece of cloth whose value was greater than that of the clothing worn by any of the others. Among the Vakuanyama it was noticeable that the principal wife wore a head-dress of clay with five horns; and in addition to this she had costly necklaces of ostrich-eggshell beads, also more of the coveted *omba* shells than were allowed to other wives. In this way the prestige of the first or great wife is preserved.

The persistence of custom, the force of education through suggestion in early years, and the power of social attitudes, are well illustrated by the survival of kinship terms and the classificatory system of relationships, with its marriage prohibitions and sanctions of an arbitrary kind. The strength of the mores and the fundamental nature of this system of relationship in determining marriage, descent, succession, and inheritance, are indicated by the fact that the system is unaltered after three centuries of contact with Europeans.

The rights of a mother's brother extend so far as a sale of his sister's children to redeem his own debts; and reciprocally he is responsible for the conduct of his sister's children, even to the extent of paying fines for the thefts they may commit. This prerogative and responsibility of the maternal uncle is fundamental, and around the trait cluster points of law and legal procedure.

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Ethnologists have often emphasized the supposed subjection of the individuals to the group. Initiation rites do tend to uniformity of conduct and group control; yet among the Ovimbundu there are renowned leaders of caravans, chiefs who are respected because of their justice and intelligence, also medicine-men, craftsmen, and musicians who display great individuality. Their self-expression in tribal life results from special aptitude and natural force of character, which qualities are made evident by daily actions, or through loquacity in the council house. In several localities live chiefs, who, by personality and tact, make possible a social adjustment between the indigenous culture and foreign intruders.

In former times kings were at the head of the legal and military systems, and in this capacity they acted when appeals were made from the jurisdiction of village chiefs. Prosperity of the country is today thought to center in kings both living and dead, and the extant ritual associated with the obsequies of a king is an illustration of this dependence. The importance of the medicine-man as a diviner, physician, and rain-maker is little diminished even at the present day.

The operation of village communism and the manner in which this centers about persons of importance is seen during the preparation of a new site for a village. A description has been given relating to the selection of the site, employment of communal labor, the creation and distribution of new fire, and the function of the medicine-man on this occasion.

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Direct questioning concerning spiritual beliefs and the nature of a supreme being elicits little information, and that of a contradictory kind. As usual, actions are more important than statements. At a funeral, women dance, clap hands, and sing, "God has cheated us of a life." The inference seems to be that Suku gives and determines life. Beliefs respecting the good and bad spirits (*Olosande* and *Olondele*) are deeply ingrained in the lives of the Ovimbundu, who are confident of the need for placation of spirits by sacrifice, the use of wooden figurines, and the aid of the medicine-man. A study of the contents of a diviner's basket gives a clear idea of the powers and the activities of spirits; and the function of a spirit, which is able to hear and answer the living, is understood after observing the questioning of the corpse at a funeral. Without doubt, a belief in spirits and a reliance on the power of medicine-men are two of the fundamental ideas which permeate every thought and activity of the Ovimbundu, for by these agencies mundane matters are raised to a spiritual level.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

I cannot find in the life of the Ovimbundu anything to support the opinion of W. C. Willoughby. This writer sees in the soul of every race an instinct for god that tells upon behavior, an upward urge that makes for betterment, due to the unwearied play of the spirit of god on the souls of man. The views of E. Torday and R. J. van Wing (Dualism in Western Bantu Religion and Social Organization, *J.R.A.I.*, XLVIII, p. 225) seem to be more applicable to the spiritual beliefs of the Ovimbundu.

The Ovimbundu have standards of conduct, codes of laws, crimes, and punishments. In addition to the *ekandu* (antisocial acts) already noted, *ohembi* is a liar, *okusapa* means to be greedy, and such actions are deprecated; but there is no deistic injunction toward the virtues of truthfulness, hospitality, and fair dealing.

Standards of conduct and social values are preserved by the educational forces previously mentioned (chapter VII), and in addition to these there are such controls as trial by ordeal, and divination to detect guilt. The satirical song is also a form of correction, though its application may be antisocial, for instance in taunting the sexually impotent.

Music and dancing are adjuncts for the preservation of social customs and the stimulation of collective emotions on which cooperation depends. Music and dancing are also aids to magical practices. For example, a friction drum is played while a medicine-man carries out his divination with the basket, and vigorous drumming takes place during treatment of the sick. Music and dancing were again seen to be of importance at a funeral ceremony.

These instances, which are chosen from many of like kind reported in the foregoing chapters, serve to indicate an interrelationship among the main aspects of tribal life. I have endeavored to choose from personal experience those facts and incidents which illustrate the mutual dependence of language, folklore, proverbs, nature lore, food supply, and occupations.

The sexual division of labor, the connection of ceremonial with occupation, the relationship of the sexes, and the position of woman, have all been brought forward as examples of social controls.

The persistence of belief and custom despite foreign influences; the nature of government, including the psychology of prestige and leadership; spiritual beliefs; the training of children; and the value of music and dancing, have likewise been emphasized as coordinating

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principles among the religious, social, and economic aspects of tribal life.

In searching for some monism which integrates tribal thought and conduct, I would emphasize the relationship between the sacred and profane. The former is derived from the latter by ritual acts which are frequently, but not exclusively, connected with the medicine-man and spirits of the dead. These departed spirits do not sever their connection with the living. On the contrary, they are concerned with the affairs of men, which they handle benevolently or malevolently according to caprice.

Attention has been called to the importance of fire when ceremonially kindled and distributed; this is but a single instance of the sacred use of an everyday commodity. A woman's belt is an ordinary item of clothing, but it may be something more important. A woman who is the mother of girls only, exchanges belts with the mother of boys only, and in future the mother of female children will give birth to boys, and conversely. This is the simplest instance of transfer from a secular to a magical use without resort to an intermediary person such as the medicine-man.

Bows, mats, and staffs are articles of everyday use until their owners are dead and the articles are deposited in the house of bows. Such a house is then sacred, because the ancestral spirits can be induced to enter it to grant favors after sacrifice has been made. Cowrie shells were normally a medium of exchange, but they may become a charm in order to induce conception. A snake's backbone acquires power when threaded by the medicine-man and placed round the neck of a patient who suffers from rheumatism. A cooking pot of clay is entirely secular until it becomes the property of a hunter, after which no other person may use it. A piece of an ant hill is merely earth. But if the belated traveler takes such a piece from the top of the hill and places it in the fork of a branch there will be an extension of daylight. A ritual element enters in the spell, "O sun, wait for me a little while."

The unifying and binding effect of magical rites, simple or complex, private and public, is the warp of the fabric by which the weft threads of the social pattern are bound together. To vary the metaphor, tribal life is a sphere of action, a universe having principal units around which others revolve. Each unit of the structure has a course and movements peculiar to itself, but there is no actual isolation from the influences of other bodies.

4:Dorsey E-4, 5 (no date)1899 FP13 Mbundu FP13

THE OCIMBANDA, OR WITCH-DOCTOR OF THE OVIMBUNDU OF PORTUGUESE SOUTHWEST AFRICA.

114 In July of last year the Anthropological Department of the Field Columbian Museum secured an ethnological collection from the Ovimbundu of the Portuguese African province of Angola. The collection was made by Rev. T. W. Woodside, a missionary for seven years among the Ovimbundu, and, on account of its completeness and the full data which accompanied the objects, is of unusual [121] importance and value. Perhaps of chief interest among the series of objects illustrating the various phases of native life in this region is the complete "medicine chest" of a witch-doctor. This I shall describe, making free use of the extensive notes furnished by Mr. Woodside, supplemented by several conversations during which the objects themselves were discussed, and much information furnished concerning the Ovimbundu in general. The collection under consideration was obtained from a single individual, and has seen long use.

101 The Ovimbundu are a southern division of an extensive group of people known as the Bundas, who, in turn, belong to the group of Bantu populations. They occupy the territory of the Bailundu and Bihe plateaus, from Bengualla to the Quanza River, a table-land 4000 to upwards of 6000 feet high, and in south latitude about twelve 142 degrees. The Ovimbundu are described by Mr. Woodside as a dark-skinned people, varying from coffee-brown to quite black, with thick curly hair. They are entirely uncivilized, but are a peaceable, 105 kindly people. Their food is chiefly vegetal, although they possess cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, and chickens. They practise polygamy, and the women prepare the food and do nearly all the field work. The men are famous as traders, and journey to the interior for rubber, wax, ivory, and slaves; the latter they secure by purchase from the country of the Lubas. The principal medium of exchange is a cheap cotton cloth which is obtained from white travellers.

791 Among the Ovimbundu, as in nearly all parts of Africa, the 759 witch-doctor is an important personage. He is feared by all classes, and often has more influence and power than the chief himself. Whenever anything is lost or stolen, they apply to the witch-doctor to find out where the object is, or who is the thief. As no one is [761] supposed to die a natural death, the doctor is called in to discover the witch who caused the death. To him they go for all kinds of charms to protect themselves against all evils, or to cast a spell on some one whom they wish to injure; to him they also go for help in

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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CONCLUSIONS

The phrase 'A Study of Social Control and Social Change among the Ovimbundu' implies an analysis of the working of the social maintenance mechanism in a period of social change. The concept appears almost paradoxical since it seems that effective maintenance machinery[1] would prevent social change, and rapid social change is often associated by anthropologists with a situation of individual and social demoralization and disintegration.[2] At the present time the Ovimbundu of the area where fieldwork was done have undergone very rapid social change and have a reasonably effective system of social control, which, however, differs considerably from the traditional system. To confirm these statements, I briefly summarize the material provided in previous chapters.

In the time of the rubber trade (1874–1911) there existed a number of Umbundu kingdoms. The king, assisted and checked, as elsewhere in Africa by titled ministers, was responsible for external relations, undertook certain rituals, and provided a supreme court of appeal where trials were conducted by set rules of procedure. The real unit of law, as regards Gumba at least, seems to have been the sub-chiefdom, with its few thousand inhabitants, governed by a chief who like the king had to administer justice together with his councillors.

This body of councillors included the village headmen who were the heads of bodies of agnatic kin. They had general legal and political responsibility for the village. While the disputes arising in village relations were kept within the patrilineal kin group, the problems arising from the inheritance of movable goods and particularly from the highly important caravan trade were dealt with in the matrilineal group. Owing to the dispersed nature of this group and to its commercial preoccupations the sanctions operating within it must have differed somewhat from those found at the chief's court or village men's

[1] For this term see S. F. Nadel, *Theory of Social Structure*, London, 1957, p. 35.
[2] e.g. G. and M. Wilson, *Analysis of Social Change*, Cambridge, 1945.

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
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house. Wealthy members who did not assist their kin were liable to be accused of sorcery. A mother's brother had the right to sell his sister's son as punishment for the latter's misconduct or to pay his own debts, a sanction counterbalancing the rights of the poorer matrilineal kin to receive loans without the obligation of repayment. As the matrilineal groups existed apparently across sub-chiefdom boundaries they formed a means of social control in those trading activities which provided the major focus of Umbundu interests and which flowed over the boundaries of the political groupings whose smallest unit was the patrilineally based village.

The disappearance of the matrilineal kin groups must be associated with the collapse of the old economy, and to judge from my difficulty in getting information about them their disintegration must have come about fairly rapidly after the end of the trade. Authority within the sub-chiefdom and village remained at a level fairly near the traditional norm till about 1935. After that social change has rapidly dissolved most of the traditional institutions.

The existing system of social control depends on political, local, and kinship systems very different from those previously operative. Cases are very often taken to the post without being previously taken to the chief. The latter's position is a combination of executive of the orders of the post (a role he shares with the government headman) with the surviving prestige represented by the skulls of his predecessors and the ministerial titles allocated to his kinsmen and associates. While the chief and government headmen may settle minor cases, they do not operate any system of courts by which disputes can be regularly and satisfactorily settled.

Judicial power has been effectively transferred from the indigenous society to the 'civilized' community and for a dispute to be brought to a settlement a decision must be obtained from some 'civilized' person or a negotiated arrangement may be made under threat of referring the matter to the post. Considerable importance therefore attaches to the mobilization of ties with some 'civilized' person who may be an employer but is most frequently the mission, which to some degree acts as a patron for all natives. Hence the local

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representatives of the mission, the catechist and elder of the school, tend to become the guardians of the public interest against arrogance on the part of the chief and government headmen.

In the conflict between the local representatives of the post and of the mission the latter are likely, if they have a good case, to win since they have a closer link with the mission than the chief and government headmen have with the post. While the policy of the administration of dissolving the indigenous political system has been highly successful it has not created new bureaucratic institutions at the local level, and the chief and government headmen have just sufficient power to do what the post tells them to do. The traditional headmen, while they still act as focuses of kin ties in a village have prestige rather than power; a prestige, however, sufficient to rally considerable support for them in a dispute. The catechetical school and its officials, represent the village to the outside world and provide what is nowadays the only institutional grouping on a village basis.

The role of the missions in social control is threefold; the establishment of new social groupings and forms of leadership at village level, the decision of disputes and the influencing of the *chefe's* decisions, and the giving of a feeling of approximation to the 'civilized' population. It is the missions rather than the chiefs and headmen who provide the main social bridges between the 'civilized' and native populations, since both groups participate in their institutions and values.[1]

The kinship system, whose operation must form an important part of any system of social control, has also undergone very great changes. The old kinship groups have disappeared, and the system is now cognatic, with little distinction between patrilateral and matrilateral kin although there is a certain matrilineal pull in choice of residence. Kinship norms have

[1] This does not deny the importance of the administration and the economy in linking the 'civilised' and natives together; yet this administrative and economic integration does not provide the sense of community which to a limited degree is given through the missions, which also provide the only opportunity for individual natives to have influence in a social sphere beyond the range of kin and neighbours; in the Catholic missions by the provision of an influential patron, in the Protestant Native Church by participation in Church councils and courts.

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become confused and vague; the existence of a kinship tie provides an opportunity to build a social relation rather than a jural obligation to fulfil certain duties. With the disappearance of the commensality which marked the patrilineal kin, and the economic co-operation characteristic of the matrilineal groups, the elementary family has emerged as the primary domestic and economic grouping.

In this rather amorphous system, coherence is given by the marriage tie. The very high rate of preferential marriages creates a great number of affinal (and subsequently kinship) ties within a limited area, and it seems to be from this that the neighbourhood community derives its cohesion. At the level of the individual marriage (as opposed to that of the total structure) the relation between husband and wife is a very close one, with, conversely, the relation between a man and his wife's lover being the archetype of hostility.

It is now necessary to see how the description of the two systems of social control relate to the problems of the social changes which have intervened to turn into the other. Obviously social change has been very great. It is not perhaps possible to point to any one factor responsible for the speed of the process. The old political system would not have disintegrated if the administration had used it as the intermediary between it and the natives. However, the hostility of the administration to the chiefs has not succeeded in all parts of Angola in breaking down traditional authority.[4]

Economic change has certainly affected very considerably the social structure. In other parts of Africa a cash economy gained by selling crops and working for wages has replaced a subsistence economy where exchanges were made by barter and gift exchanges. The Ovimbundu were experienced traders used to a currency and with a business-like, rather grasping outlook.[5] Through the matrilineal groups this commercial activity was fitted into the kinship system. The disappearance of the trade brought a sharp fall in the Umbundu standard of living and destroyed the need for developed credit facilities. Instead of the

[4] Among the Ngangela of the area round Vila Artur de Paiva the chiefs retain their authority.

[5] See Serpa Pinto, pp. 169–71 and F. S. Arnot, *Garenganze*, London, 1889, p. 116.

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gaining of wealth by means involving extensive economic co-operation among the Ovimbundu themselves, money was earned in an individual relation to a particular European whether planter or trader.

It must be recognized that the relation between economic change and the continuation or disintegration of kinship groups is a yet unsolved problem of anthropology,[6] particularly as it is seldom possible to isolate the economic pressure. I emphasize the readiness of the Ovimbundu for change, their willing acceptance of the role of clients to the whites.[7] It may be suggested that this attitude was established in the period of the trade when the Ovimbundu were ultimately dependent on the whites for trade goods and that this attitude of imitation and receptivity lies behind the disappearance of so much of the old social structure and the lack of any myth of, or even interest in, the past.[8]

I have claimed that the present system of social control is effective.[9] This may be granted empirically for the reasons already given, the absence of serious crime or prolonged conflict involving the whole community, the effective checks on the functionaries of the post, and the failure of squabbles to tear the network of kin and affinal ties. If a working social system is a proof of an integrated society, then contemporary Umbundu society qualifies for this description. This is not the only possible way of looking at it. It may be claimed that under present circumstances the Ovimbundu are no longer integrated by their tribal system but are held together by the Angolan

[6] For various comments on this problem see A. I. Richards, in *African Systems of Kinship and Marriage*, p. 251, M. Fortes, 'Structure of Unilineal Descent Groups', in *American Anthropologist*, Feb. 1953, M. Douglas (review of Mitchell's *The Yao Village*) in *Africa*, July 1957.

[7] Cf. the Ngangela name for the Ovimbundu, the Ovimbali, a term traditionally applied to Africans living in close contact with the whites. The Ovimbundu accept this stereotype.

[8] 'A lack of history is correlated with the amorphous character of the society.' E. Colson in Colson and Gluckman (ed.) *Seven Tribes of British Central Africa*, Oxford, 1951, p. 100.

[9] Other quarrels of which I heard while in Epalanga: a messenger from the mission sent to intervene in a marriage dispute was attacked; the chief of Chicunda summoned to the mission for a telling-off after beating up one of his people; a man from Gumba refusing to go to a funeral in Cassongue of a man whose death he was thought to have caused by sorcery.

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Government,[10] which has deprived them of all legal and political autonomy. The present Umbundu social system deprived of any form of public life ticks over, as a man who has been paralysed may continue to live. The cultural barriers and structural gulf between the post, the basic unit of the administration, and the people, are to a certain extent bridged by the mission. This task throws a considerable strain on the organizations set up by the missions, to which they are far from equal.[11] The common values shared by 'civilized' and native, whose introduction was ascribed to the missions, give the Ovimbundu psychological compensation rather than a genuine participation in the culture of the ruling group. The stability which marks social relations in the area is passivity rather than integration.

The most truthful approach would seem to be a synthesis of the two arguments. The disintegration of the old legal and political institutions and the attitude of dependence and passivity towards Europeans cohere with a stability provided by the pattern of kin and affinal ties and the continuity of local relations. It has been argued that the range of marriages (and hence the range of kinship ties) has not noticeably expanded in recent years, and that the links which orient Gumba to the north and west rather than to the south and east date back to the nineteenth century. Such other factors as the poor local communications, the limited economic development of the area, and the absence of resident whites in Gumba may also have helped to preserve the continuity and security of the 'private' life of individuals.[12] In other areas of Umbundu country, especially near the railway line, where communications are easy, Europeans and *assimilados* are numerous, and there are more marked differences of wealth, this 'coherence' of change and continuity may have very much less empirical efficiency.

In one part of Umbundu country in 1955, a contra-acculturá-

[10] Putting it another way; there is no Umbundu political system, and hence the nearest approach to Umbundu politics are the squabbles of Chapter IX.

[11] The missionaries complain of the poor calibre of many catechists, and the catechists complain of the lack of obedience of their people.

[12] The relations between two individuals may remain friendly, even though the form of their relations changes.

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In one part of Umbundu country in 1955, a contra-acculturative

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tive movement arose which combined features found in cargo-cults and anti-witchcraft campaigns,[18] social activities usually regarded as products of a malaise in the relations between Europeans and an indigenous society.[19] The Ovimbundu whom I knew were not ready to take the initiative in their dealings with the 'civilized' population; but it would be wrong to regard the system of social control that I have tried to describe as being true for much more than a very small area of Umbundu country and a very limited extent of time.

[18] The movement began at Bela Vista on the railway line and spread over south-eastern Umbundu country into the Ngangela area. Its leaders were men and women who called themselves saints and claimed to have died and come to life again. They announced that all sorcery would cease, and those who continued it would die in an unusual way. They forbade the wearing of black clothes and ordered the killing of black livestock (fowls and pigs). They also forbade the growing of maize for sale. It was stated that rain would come from heaven to kill the whites (according to some accounts only the bad whites) and the blacks would then have their goods. This movement was spread through the catechetical schools. It was eventually repressed by administrative action. Private information. Also article in *O Apostolado*, Luanda, Oct. 27, 1956.

[19] See A. I. Richards, 'A Modern Movement of Witchfinders', *Africa*, Oct. 1933.

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Identification

The Mbundu (Mambari, Mbali, Mbari, Munano, Ovimbali, Ovimbundu, Vakonano, Vakuanano, Vanano, Bimbundu, Banano, Nano), who are sometimes confused with the quite different Kimbundu (q. v.), are a Bantu nation of the Benguella highlands in central Angola. They number about 1,300,000 (1940). They are culturally and linguistically akin to the Ndombe, Ngumbi, and Nyaneka tribes to the south. The European conquest was not completed until 1902. The component sub-tribes with independent states, whose dialects differ exceedingly little, are the following, in approximate order of population:

a. Bailundu (Mbailundu). Tributary states: Cenge (Chilenge), Cipeyo (Quipeyo), Kasongi (Cassongue), Namba, Ngalanga (Galanga), Sange.
b. Viye (Bie, Bihe).
c. Wambu (Huambo). Tributary state: Mbongo (Bongo).
d. Ciyaka (Quiaca). Tributary state: Elende (Lende).
e. Ngalangi (Galangue).
f. Civula (Quibula).
g. Ndulu (Andulo, Ondura).
h. Cingolo (Quingolo).
i. Kalukembe (Caluquembe).
j. Sambu (Sambo).
k. Eketete (Quiquete).
l. Kakonda (Caconda, Cilombo, Quilombo).
m. Citata (Quitata).

Basic Economy

Primarily agricultural, with very important subsidiary animal husbandry and some hunting and fishing. Brand-tillage, hoe cultivation, and a little irrigation are practiced. The staple crops are maize and beans. Subsidiary crops include sorghum, millet ("Kafir corn"), emmer wheat, manioc (important), peanuts, sweet potatoes, squash, bananas, garden vegetables, cotton, and a little rice. Considerable numbers of cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, dogs, chickens, and bees are kept. Goats are not milked, nor are cattle as a rule. The caravan trade was formerly very important.

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Sex Division of Labor

Men hunt, tend all domestic animals except chickens, fish (though women also fish with nets), and do the heavy work of land clearance. Women gather and do most (but not quite all) the agricultural work. Men help with harvest; women, in game drives.

Property

Livestock, especially cattle, are the chief measure of wealth. Land is owned by patri-sibs, whose male members enjoy hereditary usufruct rights.

Land and livestock are inherited by males only--by different rules. The inheritance of land is patrilineal--from Fa to So or from ElBr to YoBr. Livestock and other movables, however, are matrilineally inherited--by SiSo or other male matrilineal kinsman.

Social Stratification

There is a royal class and a hereditary aristocracy (members of the royal sib). Slavery is prevalent, and the slave trade was formerly important. Slaves are acquired through capture in war or through debt (the debtor pawns a SiCh). The children of slaves (perhaps not debt slaves) are slaves, even when the offspring of a slave wife by her master. Smiths, like professional hunters and diviners, constitute a sacred (not a despised) craft.

Marriage

Marriage is effected by payment of a bride-price to the bride's MoBr (today increasingly her Fa). It consisted formerly of cattle and other goods, today of a smaller amount in pigs, cloth, etc. There is a rite of symbolic capture.

Polygyny is permitted, but only in the non-sororal form. In one genealogical study 25% of the married men were found to be polygynous. The first wife is chief wife, but each wife has her own hut. Secondary marriages are favored with BrWi, allowed with MoBrWi. The Hu rotates, spending 4-7 nights with each wife.

Family

An independent nuclear or polygynous family, with slaves and dependent relatives, occupies a compound, separated from others by

a palisade or fence. There is no extended family organization.

Residence

Patrilocal residence is the norm--in a separate compound on the land and in the village of the groom's father. There are isolated instances of matrilocal residence and fairly frequent cases of avunculocal residence. Children at the age of 6 or 7 are commonly sent to live with a MoBr for a year or two, and they commonly join him on the death or divorce of their parents. At adolescence a boy moves into an independent hut, where he will later bring his bride.

Kin Groups and Exogamy

Local agamy is reported by Evambi and Hambly, and appears probable from McCulloch, though Childs indicates that local exogamy is the norm and Gibson accepts local exogamy.

Marriage is forbidden (also sex relations) with any primary relative and with a grandparent or grandchild. It is allowed, however, with FaSi, SiDa, and cross-cousins, the preferred union being with MoBrDa.

Double descent prevails. There are both localized patri-sibs (oluse) and non-localized matri-sibs (oluina), each with ritual leaders. Sibs of both types are divided into a "male side" and a "female side"; though the nature of this division is not clear, Barnes believes that the "male side" of a patri-sib includes its male members only, the "female side" its female members and also their children of both sexes, whereas the "female side" of a matri-sib includes its female members only and the "male side" its male members and their offspring. A child thus belongs to its father's patri-sib (boys to the male and girls to the female side), to its mother's matri-sib (boys to its male and girls to its female side), to its father's matri-sib (male side only), and to its mother's patri-sib (female side only). Since marriage is preferred into the male side of one's own patri-sib and the female side of one's own matri-sib, especially the latter, neither type of kin group is exogamous. Patri-sibs are apparently divided into lineages, localized in wards. There is a royal sib. Witchcraft is inherited exclusively in the female line.

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Kinship Terminology

Fa--tate. Mo--mai. Ch--omola. Hu--veya. Wi--ukai. Avuncular and nepotic terms are strictly of bifurcate merging type. Cousin terms are of Iroquois type.

Settlement Pattern

The Mbundu live in palisaded villages including from 5 to 500 households (but population rarely reaches 3,000). On the plains the villages are usually a circle of household compounds around a man's house and dancing place; in the mountains the dwellings are commonly arranged on parallel ledges. Villages are normally divided into wards, and these into family compounds. The dwellings are usually round, occasionally rectangular, with wattle-and-daub walls and conical thatched roofs.

Community Organization

A village is normally a patrilocal clan-community or localized patri-sib; a ward appears to be a clan-barrio or localized patri-lineage. Circumcision and clitoridectomy are practiced in S, not elsewhere. In the S and SE there are initiation camps associated with the formation of apparently incipient age-grades.

Local Government

Each village has a headman, the head of the local patri-clan. He is village priest as well as chief, having charge of the spirit-hut of the village guardian spirit, tending a sacred fire, and officiating at agricultural and other festivals. Succession is patrilineal--by ElSo or next younger Br. Each ward also has a head, and the ward heads apparently act as a village council of elders.

State

The Mbundu are organized into 13 independent petty states and 9 dependent states tributary to the former. Each is headed by a paramount chief, who lives in a capital village, near which, but separated, is a smaller compound occupied by the war leader. The ruler is judge, high priest, and supreme military leader. His chief wife is always of slave origin. He is assisted by councillors, who assist him at court trials and have the power to depose him. Each state is

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administered, and taxes collected, through district chiefs and local headmen under them. Some district chiefs are hereditary; others are appointed by the paramount chief and normally include his chief wife, members of the royal family, and prominent court officials. Succession is patrilineal, the council selecting a successor from among the sons, brothers, or fraternal nephews of the ruler. A new fire ceremony is held at the installation of a new paramount chief. There are numerous titled nobles, including the district chiefs and such court officials as household guardian, steward, and bodyguard. The councillors or elders were perhaps heads of matrilineal kin groups; the chief councillor was succeeded by his SiSo.

Warfare

The Bailundu and Viye groups raided the Luimbe, Ngonyelu, and other eastern neighbors for slaves. There is incidental mention of human sacrifice and ceremonial cannibalism.

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